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Paul Writes Fellow Members of Congress *Seeks Support for Bill to Pull US from WTO*

Today Congressman Ron Paul wrote to fellow Members of Congress asking that they join him and cosponsor HJR 90, a privileged resolution seeking to remove the United States from the World Trade Organization (WTO). By law, the House must grant expedited consideration to the resolution which Paul introduced Monday together with original cosponsors Duncan Hunter, James Duncan, Gene Taylor and Jack Metcalf. "When the US joined the WTO 146 Members of Congress stood up and voted No, now that we have seen the record of the WTO it is time for a majority of the House to get out," Paul said. Detailing some of the actions of the WTO to which he objects Paul pointed not only to the fact that European nations were ignoring WTO decisions but, more importantly he said, "on issues from environmental issues such as imported shrimp to tax policy, the WTO has ruled against the people of the United States." Paul was particularly critical of the WTO ruling against Foreign Services Corporations. "The WTO is not pro-trade, they believe that the American people are under-taxed and that is what this ruling against FSC's shows. Look, our nation was founded on the cry of no taxation without representation and frankly it is not up to bureaucrats in Geneva to tell Americans what tax policies they can and cannot have." Paul said he had long predicted that this kind of adverse ruling would come from the WTO "when we surrender decision making to an international organization that does not care one whit for American interests or the citizens we are elected to represent how could we expect any other outcome?" Paul also reiterated his own strong support for free trade. "We should have low tariffs and trade freely with other nations, in fact I believe we should end our embargoes on nations like Cuba, Iraq and Iran," Paul said. "The problem is not trade but rather surrendering our policies to these feckless bureaucrats at international organizations," Paul stated. Paul was also critical of the administration and its handling of the issue. "They filed their WTO report late, that is yet another explicit violation of federal law, so obviously the administration does whatever it wants even when there is a controlling legal authority." Paul also criticized US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky for comments she reportedly made about the Congress. Barshefsky reportedly suggested that Congressmen were unqualified to consider trade issues "most of them do not even hold passports" she was reported as stating. In response, Paul concluded, "The Clinton-Gore Administration may hold the American people in contempt but I reject these highly offensive attacks. Perhaps the bureaucrats hired by Clinton and Gore believe the American people are stupid for electing representatives who do not hold passports but we will not be intimidated, we have a right to representation in this country and we will vote on this bill regardless of the tactics of this administration. We are not going to sit back and let the WTO set tax, trade, environmental and labor policy for the United States simply because this administration trusts bureaucrats in Switzerland more than it trusts the American people and their representatives here in Congress."

